

AN
EXPLANATION
AND
DEFENCE
OF THE
SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF THE
TRINITY;

PARTLY IN ANSWER TO
MR. J. WILSON,
HOLAR of Magdalen College, CAMBRIDGE.

BY JAMES SIKES, A LAYMAN.

do you Transgress the Commandment of God by your
ditiou? Mat. xv. 3.

it the beam out of thine own Eye, and then shalt thou
clearly to pull out the mote out of thy brother's eye,
y. vi. 24.

WHITEHAVEN:

ED BY B. N. DUNN,

1799.

DEFENCE

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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ED. M. DUMM

INTRODUCTION.

THAT remark which Moses the servant of God made unto the children of Israel, is absolutely necessary to be observed by all orders and degrees of men to the latest generation; "Secret things belong unto the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed, belong unto us and our children for ever (a)."

But it has been a prevailing evil in the churches, both Jewish and Christian, that human tradition hath so far been mixed with the commandments of God, as to make the latter, in some matters, of little or none effect; this was loudly complained of by the Prophets, Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, against many of those who were accounted learned, great, and wise.

For sad experience proves that neither learning, greatness, wisdom, antiquity, nor a multitude of votaries, ~~can~~ ^{can} tolerate a single individual to depend implicitly on what is held or proposed as a point of faith, or practice, in any one instance, without the clearest authority from divine Revelation.

For it may be seen plainly, that there have been Popes against Popes, Counsels against Counsels, some Fathers against others, the same Fathers against themselves, a consent of Fathers of one Age, against a consent of Fathers of another Age, and the Church of one Age, against the Church of another Age.

Hence it is obvious how little dependence can with certainty be placed on human opinion, as it regards the explication of the Doctrine of the Trinity. According to the commonly received definition of it, the *Father* is of

(a) Deut. xxix. 29.

none, but is *Self-existent* and *Eternal*; the *Son* is of the *Father*, and yet is *Independent*, *Self-existent*, and *Co-eternal*; and the *Holy Ghost* is of the *Father*, and the *Son* procession, and yet is *Co-equal*, and *Co-eternal*; none fore, nor after another.

Now if this explication was clearly revealed in Scriptures, even in general terms, it certainly would be our duty to believe it, implicitly, without hesitation, though we neither could comprehend nor understand by the faculty of reason; but when its partizans call it a mystery (that is a matter unrevealed) and withal they assert it, and pretend to explain it, (however full of self-contradiction) tradition instantly steps in, and man hereby plunging beyond his depth, becomes more liable to sink into error, than to swim with safety on its border.

In my presuming to differ in opinion from the general opinion of Professors, I would not for that reason insinuate, that they are wanting in piety, or purity of motive; or that they are negligent in their researches after truth; I for the same conscientious reason that they differ one from another in other respects, I, in *this particular*, am induced to contradict a prevailing notion; although in doing I am aware I shall oppose a sentiment which of I was induced to hold, owing to the absurdity of the aforesaid explication as it respects the Divinity of *Christ* and of the *Holy Ghost*, which is generally held by teachers of Christianity; and which having no foundation in the Bible, but merely of human invention, caused me to fly from so antisciptural, unreasonable and self-contradictory a notion, to another extreme; so that in running as far as possible from one error, I got into another: where the motive is pure, the mind is open to conviction and is thankful upon discovering the *Truth*, let the instrument, or mean, be whatever it may; not that I attribute the smallest degree of light, or information to what Mr. J. W. has lately published; for the substance is not new to me, having frequently seen not only many of the arguments, but the very words, in the works of different authors; and had he been as just, as he pro-

to be *wise*, he would have owned the quotations he has made in his work. However, I am *partly* beholden to him; for in *attempting* a reply to the bitter animadversions contained in his pamphlet, I was happily led to a discovery of the *Truth*, laying (as it were) *between us*, by an author called MURRAY, in his work intitled "a clear display of the Trinity, &c." from which performance, and another (the author's name and title unknown) I have made several extracts, which this *general acknowledgement* will, I hope, be deemed a sufficient apology for.

In the following work my design, therefore, is not to attempt to defend my *former* opinion, that "God is One in essence and person" for that I cheerfully give up; although the word person applies more properly to a *Creature* than the *Creator*; but as the weakness of language, and human ideas, will not admit of a more suitable phrase whereby to explain so sublime a subject, therefore it shall pass with me; yet I fear it furnishes the mind with many carnal imaginations concerning the Supreme Being, and is all-together unscriptural.

But the Intent is to shew that the principle of the doctrine is false and absurd on which Mr. J***** W*****'s arguments are founded; namely that *Christ's Divinity* lays in his *Sonship* by eternal generation, or his being begotten of the *Father*, from all eternity; and that the *Holy Ghost* proceeded from the Father and the Son from all eternity; by which generation, and procession, two persons of the three originated; and yet, behold reader! you are required to believe according to this antisciptural mystery that the *Father* did not exist *prior* to the *Son*, although the *Son* was begotten of him; nor yet that the *Father* and the *Son* existed prior to the *Holy Ghost*, although *he* proceeded from them; but that each is independent, all are co-equal and co-eternal.

Whatever Mr. J***** W***** may think of his own abilities either as a scholar, or a divine, the darkness of his understanding in this particular may be discovered by

any man of common sense, who gives this matter a thought, although he be so far from knowing Greek that he may have scarcely learned the first rudiments of his mother tongue. And I could much easier prove from Scripture, every particular of my *Confession* as it lately stood, and be able to appeal to the understanding of any impartial person, as to its consistency, than he can, upon the principle and foundation of his argument (*b*).

For whether it be admitted that God is *one* or *three*, yet in substance (according to my meaning, so far as it concerns mankind) it amounts nearly to the same thing; for I believed that the *Father* was *God*, that *Christ* was *God*, and that the *Holy Ghost* was *God*, yet the same God in Essence and Person, sustaining three different relative characters towards us; and when I said that the Son of God was a *Creature*, I meant it as applying to the *Humanity* of *Christ*, or that part of *him* which is not Divine. And in doing this, I used the words of St. Paul; and I would ask, does any professor of Christianity deny that *Christ* is *Man*, as well as *God*? and surely every Man is a *Creature*; but I never said, nor meant, that *Christ* was a *Creature* only.

And

(*b*) Mr. J***** W*****n, may perhaps say that these things are not contained in his performance; but if they are not *expressed*, they are *implied*; and although (I think) his conscience cannot but assure him of the absurdity thereof, yet it will in all probability be seen that he will not scruple to subscribe to it in the most solemn manner, before the *Bishop*; seeing it lays in the way to the post of Honor, Ease, and affluence; this is not intended to reflect upon those whom divine Providence may have placed in that sphere of life: but when a man departs from the useful and important duty of calling sinners to repentance—and from the station in which the Lord called him, and others by his instrumentality, in order to loiter his time away for years together, at the feet of *Gumaliel*, to learn the wisdom of man, or, it may be, to speak in an unknown tongue, he has certainly lost sight of the true qualifications for a gospel preacher (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.) and his motive becomes liable to suspicion.

And as to the words "not One in essence, but in immediate fellowship," (as applied to the *Father* and the *Son*) in the idea of *Sonship* I then held; certainly the *Essence* of God is one thing, and the nature of Man is quite another, and even Athanasius says on this subject, "not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person;" therefore we were agreed in this respect.

I shall therefore endeavour to prove for the good of the serious enquirer (as far as the brevity of this publication will admit) that the Divine Three who are One, do not proceed one from another in their personal substances, but that they eternally exist in One Essence, or Unity of the God head; and that the term *Son of God*, has no reference to *Eternal Generation*, but is to be understood of the eternal Word becoming incarnate of the Virgin Mary; and that the procession of the *Holy Ghost* does not denote the manner of personal subsistence in the *Eternal Spirit*, but the gracious and subordinate part which he takes in the covenant of grace; and that none is greater, or less than another; none before, or after another; none by, or from another, but only in their oeconomic (c) character which they voluntarily and mercifully sustain in the work of man's redemption.

If

(c) When I speak of the *divine æconomy*, I mean the whole of God's revealed dispensation concerning Angels and Men: and by *æconomical* I understand what belongs to the regulation or management of that dispensation.

Hence this term, in its signification, points out the terms *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, as relative names graciously assumed in sovereign condescension in carrying on the great plan revealed by God in his word: and is opposed to the common notion of these names being *natural*, *necessary* and *essential* in Deity; which at once destroys the freedom and sovereignty of God in all his dispensations, which have any relation to these names.

If it please God to make this small labour in any degree subservient to his glory, by increasing in his people the knowledge of Himself, and of his *Son Jesus Christ*, the end will be answered for which it is published.

J. SIKES.

Whitchau, October 9th, 1799.



EXPLANATION, &c.

AS it is certain the scriptures were given by inspiration of God, there can be no doubt but what is thereby made known to man very much concerns him one way or other.

Therefore, we may conclude that whatever *name, title, or character*, the Supreme Being reveals himself by, it is intended to express the relation which he bears to *us* and *we* to *him*, as our Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge; our Father, Saviour, Sanctifier, &c. but is no where intended to teach us what he is in *Himself*, or the *manner* of his *existence*; for had such a discovery been necessary, He would no doubt have favoured us with it. It is sufficient for Us to know that He, with whom we have to do, is holy, just and good, almighty, and all-wise; and that whatever hath in it the nature of imperfection, is infinitely contrary to Him, so that it may with propriety be said, we know what **GOD IS NOT**, rather than what **HE IS**.

According

According to his sovereign pleasure, or man's necessity, he varied his titles, or manner of revealing himself; so that the believer in his name ever found strength and comfort in confiding and obeying; hence when *Abraham* was commanded to walk before *God*, and be perfect, the injunction was grounded on this revelation, "The Lord appeared to *Abraham*, and said, I am the Almighty *GOD*;" so that it had in it the nature of a promise, that He would be with him, and perfect his strength in his servant's weakness. (a)

Also, when he appeared to *Jacob* at Bethel, and there promised that nations should proceed from him, and kings should come out of his loins, and the land which had been promised unto *Abraham* and *Isaac*, should be conferred on *Jacob* and his seed, He there calls himself the ALMIGHTY GOD, that *Jacob* might know that (unlikely as these things were to all human probability) He was able to accomplish what He had promised, and be thereby encouraged to put his trust in Him (b).

We find also when *Moses* was sent by God into Egypt to rescue the children of Israel from their affliction, for some time after his arrival amongst them, their condition really grew worse, and deliverance seemed further off than ever; wherefore *Moses* complains unto the Lord as though He had failed to fulfil his word, (c) but he soon gets an answer sufficient to banish all his fears; for God lets him know that his name was *JEHOVAH*, denoting that He, who had promised, was faithful,

(a) Gen. xvii. 1, (b) Gen. xxxv. 11, 12. (c) Exod. v. 22, 23,

as well as *powerful*;—He says to *Moses*, “I appeared unto *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* by the name of *GOD ALMIGHTY*, but by my name *JEHOVAH* was I not known unto them. (d)” (The word translated *LORD*, in the Old Testament, is allowed commonly to be *JEHOVAH* in the Hebrew) and so lively a view had the Israelites of the endearing signification of this name, that they used it very much in their songs of praise; hence in the 15th of *Exodus* it is used eight times in the compass of eleven verses, “Then sang *Moses* and the children of *Israel* this song unto the *LORD*, saying; I will sing unto *JEHOVAH* for he hath triumphed gloriously; *JEHOVAH* is my strength and song, he is become my salvation. *JEHOVAH* is a man of war; *JEHOVAH* is his name, &c.” Also in the 12th of *Isaiah*, “The faithful declare they will praise *JEHOVAH* and tell of his doings amongst the people, &c.”

Again, when *Moses* (on being provoked at the idolatry and obstinacy of the children of *Israel*) let fall the tables of stone on which the Law was written, being full of trouble and concern for what he had done, and having to appear before the *LORD* that the Law might be renewed, therefore he reveals himself by a new name suited to the case of his servant, “The *LORD GOD* merciful and gracious, long suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.” *Moses* believed the report, and worshipping said, “If now I have found grace in thy sight, O *LORD*, I pray thee go amongst us, and pardon

(d) *Exodus* vi. 1, 2, 3.

"pardon our iniquity, and take us for thine inheritance, &c."

Hence it is obvious that the **LORD** our God suited his titles in mercy to his creatures, and varied them according to the exigencies of the children of men, that they might afford comfort and strength in the time of need. What hath been said may suffice as an example in *this*, and every other sense, in which He enforces his authority by his righteous, holy, and dreadful name; but from none of them can we discover the *manner* of his existence, or (strictly speaking) what God is in HIMSELF; but rather what He is unto us. It is generally thought that the term *Father* is natural, necessary, and eternal, as properly descriptive of *One Person* in the *Trinity*; this arises from the tradition (such as it is) that the *Father* begot a *Son*, whose existence is coeval with *His own*, i. e. *Eternal*. This is called by schoolmen *Eternal Generation*; but to use the words of the President of the last Methodist Conference, "*Eternal Generation is Eternal Nonsense*;" I am certain there is nothing in the Bible to support such a notion; but man not liking to be contradicted may try to support a tottering cause, and by sophistical arguments endeavour to plead for an old tradition held and taught by the great and learned; its truth however has been long suspected; and were protestants in general only inclined to think it possible for them to be misled by tradition, as well as their forefathers, I make no doubt but they would soon be as much surprized that ever such a thing should be believed, as we are now astonished concerning the once famous doctrine of *Transubstantiation*.

But I shall endeavour to prove that the term *Father* as applied to God, is a relative character, and that the *God* and *Father* of our Lord *Jesus Christ* takes that name from his Son, being begotten in *time* of the Virgin Mary; and that his being called a Son before his incarnation, was *proleptically*, or by *anticipation*, which I shall further notice in its proper place; unless it is admitted that his glorious human soul existed as the *first* of creatures*.

In all the texts where these terms *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, or any two of them, are mentioned as distinct from each other, if the scope is attended to, it will appear, that they are not distinguished as being of a different *nature*, or with respect to their *Deity*; or in the least to teach us the *manner* of their *existence*, but only in consideration of the several parts they are represented as sustaining in creation, government, redemption, and the sanctification of mankind.

The word *Father*, as applied to God in general, is a figurative term, expressing the relation between the Creator and his creatures; but can prove nothing concerning the *manner* in which the Creator exists. If the term *Father* was an essential, internal, character, peculiar to one, to

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denote

* A doctrine believed by ORIGEN, and other primitive Fathers, and also by many modern Divines, such as Dr. HENRY MORE, Dr. FOWLER, Bishop of Gloucester, a Presbyterian in the Church of England, in defence of Bishop FOWLER; Mr. ROBERT FLEMING, Mr. JOSEPH HUSSY, Dr. GASTREL, Bishop of Chester, Dr. BENNET, Dr. BURNET, Dr. KNIGHT, Dr. WATTS, and others.

denote the particular manner of his personal and divine subsistence in Deity, (as is supposed) then this term would be proper to *one only*, exclusive of the other two. But revelation teacheth us, that in many places where the term *Father* is used, *all* that is divine must be included, and not a word to point out *one only* of the divine three; but refers to GOD as the maker, and conservator of his creatures; in which sense it belongs to all the three, who, in this respect, are *one*.

Our Lord teaches his disciples to address the Divine Being under the character of *Father* (a), "Our Father, who art in heaven." It cannot be denied that all that is divine, and properly the object of worship, is included in the word *Father* here; but *Jesus Christ* and the *Holy Ghost* are included in the object of worship; therefore they must be included in the term *Father*, in this, as well as in the following texts; "Have we not all
"one FATHER?—But to us there is but one GOD
"the FATHER, of whom are all things.—One
"GOD and FATHER of all, who is above all, and
"through all, and in you all.—Shall we not
"much rather be in subjection unto the FATHER
"of Spirits and live?(b)"

But if we find that *Jesus Christ* bears the name *Father*, it will certainly prove, that it is not peculiar to *one*, and so cannot in any sense be descriptive of the manner he subsists in Deity. It is evident that *Jesus Christ* governed the church in the

(a) Matth. vi. 9. (b) Mal. ii. 10. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Eph. iv. 6. Heb. xii. 9.

the wilderness of whom *Moses* says, "Is he not thy FATHER that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? (c)" *Isaiah* is express to this purpose, "Unto us a Child is born" which is no other than *Jesus Christ*, "and his name shall be called—the everlasting FATHER.—Doubtless thou art our FATHER, —thou, O Lord, art our FATHER, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting. (d)" Hence it appears that the term *Father* is not given to distinguish one from another as they subsist in Deity: but rather signifies, first, a term of relation between God and man; and secondly, between God and *Jesus Christ* considered as his proper Son: which will appear more evident by considering in what further sense God is called a *Father* in Scripture.

God is called a *Father*, because he is the creator of all things, "Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us? (e)" As children bear the image of their father, so God made man in his image, "For man is the image and glory of God. (f)"

They are called *Fathers* who adopt children into their family, and give them the title and privilege of children; in this respect God is called a *Father*, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children by *Jesus Christ* to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. (g)"

C 2

He

(c) Deut. ii. 6. (d) Isa. ix. 6. lxiii. 16. (e) Mal. ii. 10. (f) 1 Cor. xi. 7. (g) Eph. i. 3—5.

He is their *Father*, as he begets them again by the energy of truth, and makes them to bear his name, “Blessed be the *God and Father* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, &c.——He that overcometh, I will write upon him the name of my *God*.(a)”

Besides such general ideas of paternity, it will be found, that there is no property or affection which fathers, as such, among men, are endowed with, that is not ascribed to God as the *Father* of his children, through faith in *Christ Jesus*, such as, feeding, loving, sparing, forgiving, correcting, sympathizing with and caring for them, &c.

With respect to *Jesus Christ*, the scripture represents *God* as a *Father*, in his being God’s begotten—his only begotten son—his first born, &c. “Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee,——We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.——Who is the image of the invisible *God*, the first born of every creature.——I will make him my first born, higher than the kings of the earth.(b)”

As a father commits the charge of all his affairs to his only son, so the *Son of God* is made governor of all things, “Unto us a son is given,——and the government shall be upon his shoulders.——The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.(c)”

As

(a) 1 Pet. i. 3. Rev. iii. 12. (b) Psal. ii. 7. John i. 14 Col. i. 15. Psal. lxxix. 27. (c) Isa. ix. 6, 7. John iii. 35. Matt. iii. 17.

As a *Father*, he owns and makes known *Jesus Christ* as his son, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.(d)"

As a *Father*, he sent the son to fulfil his will in accomplishing the work of redemption,—prepared him for that great work,—supported and instructed him therein,—and rewarded him after it was finished. To these might be added manifold instances where Christ addresses God as his *Father*; we might turn to St. Paul's Epistles for illustration of this subject, where one thing is remarkable, that in his salutations at the beginning of every epistle, he carefully supports the distinction betwixt GOD as a FATHER, and *Jesus Christ* as a SON; and to conclude all, tells us, that when he shall have finished the whole administration, which God hath entrusted him with as his Son, then he shall deliver up the kingdom to God his *Father*, and God shall be all in all.

The executive part of the divine œconomy being finished, there is no further use for the œconomical authority and subjection, the superiority and inferiority implied in the *paternal* and *filial* characters.

From the whole, I may venture to affirm, that there is not one idea which can, with any propriety, be prefixed to the term *Father*, as applied to God in the whole revelation, but what has a plain reference to the *works of God*, either in creation, providence, or redemption.

I shall now consider the scripture sense of the term *Son* as applied to the *Lord Jesus Christ*.—It has been shewed above, in several particulars, in what sense *God* is called the *Father* of *Jesus Christ*; and as father and son are correlates, that is, one that stands in an opposite relation to another, any impartial and unprejudiced reader may easily conceive in what sense *Jesus Christ* is called the *Son of God*.

But as I am pretty certain that many of my readers, through the prejudice of education, and a bias in favour of other notions concerning this point, will, on that account, not so readily see the conclusion concerning the Sonship of *Christ*, which natively flows from the scripture account of *God as a Father*; for that reason, I shall be obliged to open this subject in a more particular manner, that no room may be left for entertaining prepossessed opinions, so contrary to the scripture account of that great article of the christian faith.

I proceed therefore to ascertain the just notion of *generation*, which is so uniformly affirmed to be the proper ground of our Saviour's sonship. This is a matter of the greatest importance to a proper discovery and establishment of the truth we are investigating. The Sonship of our blessed Saviour is uniformly expressed in the same language, that is applied to the generated sons of men; wherefore it is necessary to ascertain in what generation, as applied to human beings, essentially consists, that we may thence infer what it must import when applied to express the generation of the *Son of God*.

Generation consists not in the production of a being into existence that had no sort of existence before: that is a *creation* not a *generation*. According to the most accurate discoveries, every animal and human being exists in a living animalcular state, previous to its generation. It exists in the father, partaker of his nature, and one with him in essence, yet distinguished from him by its individual subsistence. This its original existence and character depend not on the will of its father, but flow from the same constitution of nature as the father himself. While it continues in this original state it may exist with the father in the same manhood: but never is, nor can be called his son: much less can it have a filial relation to its mother, with whom it has only a capability of connection, but is not yet connected. In what, then, does generation properly consist? it consists in the union of this original living principle, communicated by the father as the chief constituent of the future child, with another and an additional substance derived from the mother in conception, forming the *complex* person procreated of both, and who from this generation and participation of the substance of both parents, is, when born into the world, called the son of both. This is the general and acknowledged theory of generation; and such are the terms in which the generation and conception of our blessed Saviour are expressed in scripture, and such is their just import.

It must however be acknowledged that, in several particulars, the *Son of God* in his generation and character must widely differ from, and infinitely

finitely transcend the generation of mere man, by which it is explained to us; and there, whatever corresponds not to the glorious subject must be removed, and the comparison stop. But from the general resemblance of the subjects, we shall find that without either straining the metaphor, or degrading in any respect the divine person and character of our glorious Redeemer, it will apply in more instances, and contribute more to illustrate this important article of our holy religion, than at first view we may be apt to imagine.— Thus for instance; does generation signify not a production of a substance, or even of a simple person that had no existence before, but the production of a *complex* person from a pre-existent principle?—the person of *Christ* is chiefly constituted of the pre-existent eternal *Logos*, or second person in the Godhead*.

Does the pre-existent principle exist in the general substance of the father, and partake of the same

* The terms *first* and *second* I am necessitated to use merely for distinction's sake, not that I think them characters *natural* and *essential* to the manner of their subsistence in Deity, as is commonly supposed: but upon what authority (tradition excepted) I know not. The scriptures no where teach that the *Father* is *first* in subsistence in Deity, the *Son* *second*, and the *Holy Ghost* *third*. It is written, "there are three, and these three are one," and more we know not; for there is not one expression in the Bible which speaks of the *Father* and calls him the *first*. The *Lord Jesus Christ* saith of himself, "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *Beginning* and the *End*, the *First* and the *Last*." No, say the supporters of this scheme, *Thou art the second*, the person of the *Father* is the *first*: Is not this teaching him to speak who gave a mouth to man? or rather, giving the lie to the God of truth?

same nature under a different subsistence?—the second person of the Godhead possesses the divine nature: and what is more the same numerical nature with the first, and possesses that nature also under a distinct personal subsistence. Is the pre-existent living principle in human generation, not the result of the father's will, nor dependent upon it for existence, but exists in and with him, by the same law or necessity of nature as himself exists?—so the divine *Logos* co-exists with the other divine persons in the same divine essence, and by the same necessity of nature, by which the Divinity in general, and every personal subsistence, in that divinity does exist.

Does human generation consist in the union of this original living principle, with an accessory substance derived from the female parent?—so this divine generation consists in the union of the divine *Logos*, not only with a human soul created by *God*, but with a human body also, derived from the substance of the blessed Virgin, and both united with the divine *Word*. Is this addition to the original principle made by the generation of the father, the conception of the mother, and the energy of the living principle?—so God the Father, by whose peculiar agency this human nature was formed and united to his divine *Word*, is affirmed to have begotten this glorious person, Psal. ii. 6.—The blessed Virgin, of whom his body was formed, is said to have conceived and born him, Isa. vii. 14.—And the *Word* to have partook of human nature, and to be made in human flesh, Heb. ii. 14.

From

From this union of the original principle with the necessary substance is there constituted and produced a more visible and complex person, possessing the nature of both parents, and taking its denomination of son from both, but chiefly from the Father from whom the chief constituent of its person was derived? so from the incarnation of the divine *Word*, is constituted the complex person of *Immanuel*, partaking perfectly the nature of God and of man, called not unfrequently, nor improperly the *Son of man*, yet chiefly and most frequently the *Son of God*. Is a son sprung of both parents the best pledge of their love? so we shall find this glorious *God-man* is the best pledge of friendship between God and *man*, and formed for every office of mediator betwixt them. Such is the amazing agreement between the incarnation of the divine *Word* and human generation. To no other view of our Saviour's person that ever has been or can be given, can these primary evidences of his sonship apply. In every essential and necessary point do they apply to our Saviour's incarnation, and the constitution of his complex person, which we have here assigned as the foundation of his sonship; and therefore they furnish a most convincing proof that in this sense, and in this only, is *Christ Jesus* the *Son of God*.

But we are not left to such physiological analogies to investigate and ascertain a truth of such infinite and universal importance to mankind. Besides these general characteristics of our Saviour's Sonship, God hath given us many particular and clear declarations of scripture, describing the person to whom this character, *Son of God*, belongs,

belongs, and directing us to judge upon what ground he possesses it.

One of the first and most noted, is that prophetic one given of him by his divine Father himself, Psal. ii. 7. "Thou art my beloved Son, this day I have begotten thee." This psalm, as every part of it indicates, and the best interpreters are agreed, contains a prediction of the glorious prince Messiah, God in our nature. The words quoted declare him to be *God's Son*, his begotten Son, begotten however, not from eternity, but expressly affirmed to be begotten *this day*, even at that auspicious æra when he was to appear as Messiah, and when the other events here predicted of him, in that character, were also to be accomplished.

Isaiah, as directed of God, thus foretels the birth and character of this *Son of God*, and rests both upon the same foundation, "Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name *Immanuel*," who, as his name imports and the inspired Evangelist hath rendered it (a), is *God with us*. Accordingly, when the same evangelic prophet describes this person as born and manifested, he says, "unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given;" clearly implying, that as in human generation, a child is not called a son till it is born, so neither did *Christ* become the son, either of God or of man, until the generation and birth of his person as *Immanuel*. Correspondent to this generation, and to the complex person
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(a) Isa. vii. 14. Matth. i. 23.

so generated are the names and offices by which he is immediately described, "The government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called, *wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace*; of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. (a)" All which characters apply to his complex person, and to that only, and also intimate that the son here foretold, was to be God and man in one person, and that by the union of these two natures in the Virgin's womb, was this wonderful and glorious Person procreated.

If from the old Testament we come forward to the new, we shall find this fundamental article of revealed religion ascertained by still clearer and more decisive evidence.

When the angel Gabriel foretels to the blessed Virgin our Saviour's conception and birth, he says, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name *Jesus*, he shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest:" that is, according to the sacred language, which calleth persons and things what they really are, he shall be the son of God most high; "and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (b)" This is the fulfilment of *Isaiah's* prophecy, and the glorious *Immanuel* is now to be conceived and brought

(a) Isa. ix. 6, 7. (b) Luke i. 31, 32.

brought forth; who is called, in the same person, the *Son of God most high*,—the *Son of David*; which plainly intimates that his sonship, both divine and human,, apply to him as God-man; and consequently that his generation consists in the union of these natures in his complex person.

St. John, when he represents our Saviour's person, represents his sonship in the very same light. He does not say, in the beginning was the *Son*, but, "In the beginning was the *Word*, and the *Word* was with *God*, and the *Word* was *God*." Here is his character, before his incarnation, as second person in the Godhead, distinct in subsistence from the other persons, yet of the same divine essence. But how does this divine person, co-eternal and co-essential with the first, become the *Son of God*? this St John clearly informs us in the 1st chap. ver. 14. "The *Word* was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the *only begotten* of the Father," and who had become such, by this accession of humanity, by the divine power, to his original divinity, as is plainly intimated. Accordingly, this apostle, who had repeatedly called *Christ*, before his incarnation, the *Word*, has uniformly after it, called him the *Son*, and the only begotten *SON OF GOD*, meaning thereby, his complete person as God-man, the Saviour of the world.

What further proves *Christ* to be the Son of God, as he is God-man, is, that the name Son of God is, in scripture, joined with all those other characters of *Christ*, both personal and official, which describe our Saviour in his complex person.

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These characters are, the Son of Man, *Christ* or Messiah, Jesus or the Saviour, together with the offices he executes in effecting our salvation. All these describe our Saviour in his compound person; and if we consult the scriptures we shall find, that with all these the term Son of God is joined, and always used as descriptive of the same person to which these are ascribed. Again; the first person of the Trinity is seldom called the Father, or the second the Son, before our Saviour's incarnation; and when they are so called, it is always with a view to it; but *after* his incarnation, they are commonly distinguished by these new relations, and by the characters expressing them.

This great truth will be still further evident, when we consider that *Christ*, as Son, is commonly represented in scripture, as somewhat inferior and subordinate to the Father, and that both in his personal and official character; and not only in his state of humiliation upon earth, but also of his highest exaltation in heaven.—But if *Christ*, as *Son of God*, is thus represented in a character inferior to the Father, and yet is affirmed as God to be equal and one with him, the plain inference is, that his character, as *Son of God*, is different from, and in some respect inferior to, his character as God; and that this inferiority must result from his having assumed an inferior nature into union with his divine person, making him thereby the Son of God.

Lastly; what further proves that *Christ* is the Son of God in his complex person, is, that this
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explication of our Saviour's Sonship, and this only, agrees with all the different characters ascribed in scripture to the Son of God: and so has the universal voice of revelation joining in proof of it.

Such is the manifold and convincing evidence (and it might have been carried to much greater length, if consistent with the brevity of our plan) that *Jesus Christ*, in the union of both his natures, is the SON OF GOD; and that he became so, when these natures were united in the generation and birth of the glorious IMMANUEL.

I will briefly here attempt to shew the absurdity and impropriety of the generally received opinion that *Christ* is Son of God by eternal generation.

The scriptures intimate that the divine plurality are as necessary, according to what they teach us concerning the being and existence of a GOD, as the divine nature, which is but one: and as the word GOD points out to us, all that is in GOD: then it must follow, that one person cannot be a cause in any sense whatsoever of the personality or existence of another: and none of these persons can be called the Son of God, in that sense which it is necessary for him to be GOD; seeing he must be included in the term GOD. This does not hinder him from being Son of God in another sense, viz. the relation he undertook in divine condescension, to fulfil the purposes of JEHOVAH concerning men, which was not absolutely necessary to the being and existence of GOD.

Now when *Christ* is called the Son of God, if the term *God* be taken for the Deity, this will destroy the popular scheme, for then he will be the son of the essence ; but according to it, he is the son of one person in the essence. If this is so, it must follow, that wheresoever the Son of God is mentioned, the term *God* must be restricted to one person, viz. the Father, exclusive of the other two. Does not this plainly suppose, that the Father only is *God*? that is to say, he is *God* in such a sense, as neither of the other two persons are ; which is the very soul of that doctrine commonly called *Arianism*.

Thus it is evident, that the *Arian* doctrine by necessary consequence is countenanced in the pretended orthodox scheme.

It cannot be denied, that every *effect* must, in point of time, be posterior or after its cause : consequently every *effect* must have a beginning. *Filiation*, or sonship, is an *effect*, and therefore must have had a beginning. Now, if one in deity be naturally and necessarily a son, it will as necessarily follow that his nature is *derived* ; since that is affirmed to be *natural* to him which is an *effect* and must be *derived*. Every kind of *derivation* supposeth the beginning of the thing derived : but *generation* (according to all the ideas we can have of *generation*) is one kind of derivation, and must necessarily suppose a beginning of that which is generated. Consequently to put *eternal* to *generation*, with reference to time *past*, is a direct contradiction, and is the same as if we should say, the *beginningless beginning* of any thing.

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We may further observe, that in those texts where *Christ* is called a *SON*, we cannot suppose his deity abstractedly is, or can be designed, according to the just and most natural interpretation of the texts.——We shall mention one or two for example; and hint the inconsistency of applying the term *Son*, expressed or understood in them, to the *pure deity* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*.

He says, “As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do(*a*).”——To suppose one in the divine plurality commanding, another obeying, without relation to their œconomical characters, is wholly inconsistent with their equality and self-existence; as the will, power, and glory of the three are one in the same nature,——“Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was(*b*).”——To confine the sonship implied here, to the *divine person* of *Christ*, would make one divine person pray to another, and that for the restoration of a glory which the same divine person once had, and is at that time divested of: all which is impossible in pure deity; for, “He is without variableness or shadow of turning.——The Father loveth the *SON*, and hath given all things into his hand(*c*).” *As a Son*, he receives all things from the Father, but *as he is God*, he can receive nothing; he hath an original right to every thing; therefore, he is not a *SON*, as he is *God*.

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(*a*) John xiv. 21. (*b*) John xvii. 5. (*c*) James i. 17.
John iii. 35.

All the fundamental articles of faith, necessary to salvation, are plain, familiar, easy to be understood, and clearly revealed in the word of God. Now to take his sonship for an eternal generation of the divine person of the *Lord Jesus*, by the person of the *Father*, is what no man ever professed to understand any thing about: but even by all the supporters thereof, it is acknowledged to be an ineffable, inconceivable mystery: which nevertheless would not make it false, was it matter of divine revelation.

Had God made known the truth of it, we were then bound to believe it, though we could not define the manner of it. But for my own part, I freely confess, after many years search, I never could find, and I suppose it would puzzle the whole world to find, the least hint of any eternal generation in all the word of God. There is not one text, where the *Lord Jesus* is called the *eternal Son of God*, or that he was begotten from *eternity*.

That he is the *eternal God* is manifest from abundance of scriptures; but that he is an *eternal Son*, the divine oracles no where intimate. —

Therefore, *eternal generation*, is merely the product of man's invention; for it cannot be gathered from revelation by the remotest consequence.

Having shewed what the scriptures teach us concerning the oeconomic characters of *Father* and *Son*, the next enquiry should be into what we learn from them of the *Holy Ghost*.

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It is allowed by the orthodox in general, that he is God, because the *names*, *perfections*, and *works* proper only to God, are ascribed to him in divine revelation. I shall therefore now but very briefly hint some things, to shew, that his scripture character is *æconomical*. As to the notion, commonly received, of a natural, necessary, and eternal procession of the *Holy Ghost*, from the *Father* and the *Son*, is what I cannot find the least authority for in revelation.

The only text alledged for proof of *eternal procession*, is what our Lord says, (John xv. 26.) "When the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the *Spirit of Truth*, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." The Spirit *proceeding* from the Father here, is manifestly speaking of his mission, not of his "essence or divine personality," as is supposed. Our Lord is intimating to his disciples, what they might expect from the Jews for bearing testimony to the truth of his character: but for their comfort in view of such difficulties, he informs them, that he would "send the comforter, as *another witness from the Father*, even the *Spirit of Truth*, who proceeds or comes out from the Father, and he should testify of him." The whole respects the greatness of the evidence, which he promises to add to what he had formerly given, concerning the truth of his being the Messiah.

As the word, *proceedeth*, in the text, is made the ground of *eternal procession*, I ask, why the *precession*

proceſſion of the Son by nature and neceſſity from the Father, is not made another article of religion? for there is the ſame reaſon for the one as the other, if our Lord is to be credited, who ſaith, “ I proceeded forth and came from God.” Now, this is never applied to the *divine perſon of Chriſt*: no, nor (by any that I know) to what they call his *eternal generation*: but is univerſally underſtood of his *miſſion*, and coming forth from God with commiſſion and authority as his *miniſter*; and common ſenſe tells us, that to *come from the Father*, and to be *ſent by him*, are terms of the ſame import.

Is it not then ſtrange! that the *proceeding* and coming forth of the *Spirit* from the *Father*, ſhould be ſcrewed up to an argument for his *eternal proceſſion*, any more than the other. As the proceeding and coming forth of *Chriſt*, ſignifies his *miſſion* into the world: ſo that of the *Spirit* muſt refer to his *official character*, as a ſanctifier and comforter, which part he acts in conſummating the great work of man’s ſalvation. But it is impoſſible that one of the divine three can exiſt by *proceeding from another*, conſiſtent with their equality and eternity.

It is maintained, that the term *Holy Ghost*, or *Spirit* is *natural*, and *peculiar* to one of the divine three; but ſuch as do ſo, ſhould inform us in what ſenſe he is peculiarly holy, or a ſpirit, that the other two are not. It is a pity that men ſhould pretend to ſee ſo far beyond revelation, and yet can render no reaſon for what they ſo boldly affirm. The ſcriptures ſay, that *God is a Spirit*,
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and that *God* is *holy*, which must include all that is called *God*.

The name, *Holy Ghost*, can therefore be no definition of any distinguishing essential property of one in the divine plurality : and so can have no reference to the internal *unity* or *distinction* among the *Divine Three*.

Holy Ghost and *Spirit of God* are terms of the same signification in the New-testament ; and are expressive of *that part he acts in the divine œconomy revealed to us in scripture*. He is called *Holy Spirit*, or *Inspirer*, because sent by the Father and the Son, to sanctify and quicken those with a principle of spiritual and divine life, whom he enables to receive his testimony in the word. In this sense, the *Father by office*, (or the part he sustains in the great œconomy) sends him as a witness and comforter. In this sense, the *Son by office*, requests the *Father* to send him ; and in this sense, the *Holy Spirit by office*, proceeds, or comes, from the *Father*.

He is called *Holy Spirit*, not to express the manner of his divine relation to the Father and Son, or his existence in Deity, as is commonly asserted ; this we have no authority for in scripture : but rather because he is infallibly *holy in himself*, and has inspired *holy men* to write the word of God, full of holy and spiritual truth, by which he works holy and spiritual principles, qualities, and affections in his people, enabling them to perform the holy and spiritual exercises or duties required therein.

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He is also called the *Spirit of God*—the *Spirit of Christ*,—the *Spirit of truth*,—of adoption,—of faith, love, holiness, a sound mind,—of supplication,—grace and glory. All which appellations evidently respect the œconomy of redemption: so that we may conclude, that *these*, with all the other names the *Holy Ghost* gets in scripture, are œconomical.

But to make this still more evident, we shall take a very short view of the works ascribed to the SPIRIT.

It is evident that creation work is attributed to the SPIRIT JEHOVAH, and it must necessarily follow that providence is another work in which he is intimately concerned.—The conducting *Israel* in the wilderness is a work attributed to the Spirit. He inspired the writers of the Old-testament,—the writings of the New-testament were indited by the same unerring guide.—He gave those whom he sent on extraordinary occasions, the power of working miracles, as a testimony of their being sent of GOD. A great part of the Spirit's work, mentioned in scripture, has a particular relation to Christ himself, in a variety of respects. It was also a great end of his mission, "to reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment." We might also notice the convincing work of the Spirit upon the redeemed,—his work in their justification, adoption, regeneration, and sanctification,—in their consolation, perseverance and growth in grace.

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From what has been briefly hinted concerning the *mission, appellations, and works of the Spirit*, it is abundantly plain, that the character of the *Holy Ghost* which we have in revelation is wholly œconomical: and that he is called *Holy Spirit*, and *Spirit of God*, from the nature of his work, which is all the internal and spiritual part of the great œconomy, which God hath purposed to carry on in all ages, till the whole is consummated in the complete felicity of his saints, in the full enjoyment of himself. And I think it will be impossible for the friends of a *natural, necessary, and eternal procession* of the *Holy Ghost*, to find any thing said of him in the Bible, that in the least favours their notion, or that is not applicable to the scripture account of the œconomy of God.

Having briefly given the scripture account of the relative characters Father, Son, & Holy Ghost, I would here exhibit in a general view some of the self-evident contradictions in that scheme (reputedly orthodox) which asserts that these names are natural, necessary and essential in deity, &c.

The first leading contradiction, which I take to be the foundation of all others, is, that though 'tis acknowledged, that revelation only teacheth us the true knowledge of God: that nothing is matter of divine faith, but what hath a divine testimony: that we are to believe nothing concerning the Trinity, but what is clearly revealed in scripture; that God alone is author of all the knowledge we can have of himself, and that this is contained in his word of revelation. These

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propositions are strictly true, and confessed to be so by the professed orthodox, who yet, are fond of a scheme in which there are many things said of God, not revealed by him, but devised, and imposed by men; who take it upon them to correct the divine eloquence, as if he who holds the fabric of nature in his hand, did not know how to accommodate his doctrines to the capacities of his creatures.

But further, they tell us that the nature of God is an ineffable mystery, beyond the comprehension of all creatures: Yet in this scheme, there is a demonstration of it, a definition of the internal modes of subsistence of all the persons in deity.

Here we are also taught that the divine person of the *Father* is *first*, the *Son* *second*, and the *Holy Ghost* *third*: yet none of the persons are either *before* or *after* another. That the Father communicates the whole of his essence to the Son, and Holy Ghost: yet it is impossible that the divine essence can be communicated at all, either in whole or in part: for God is a simple infinite, indivisible Being. He communicates his whole essence: Yet his essence is Himself; his very indivisible self: so that to communicate his essence must be to communicate or give himself. He communicates his essence whereby he becomes father: yet was always the same. By the communication of the essence to another, *He becomes a Son*: yet from all eternity the same. The one person communicates; the other receives by communication the divine essence: yet all the persons are the same in the essence; and impossible that
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there can be any change in either persons or essence.

Those among the supporters of the scheme who speak plainly, say that Christ in becoming a Son, became God : but others reckon themselves modest in saying that his divine person was begotten. But in fact the last sentiment is the same with the other which is plain from the following short argument.

As Christ is a divine person, he is God, but as a divine person, he is begotten : Therefore, he is begotten as he is God. This is the language of the scheme, which compared with other sentiments in the same well contrived system, is pregnant with contradictions. Christ, by being begotten a son, he becomes God : yet he is God over all, eternally the same with the Father. The son as a distinct person thus generated, is God of God : (that must be, one would think, another God distinct from the God he is of) yet there is but one God. The divine person of Christ was begotten : yet not his deity begotten. Jesus Christ is the son of God according to his divine nature : yet the divine nature of the Son is no more begotten, than the divine nature of the Father. One of the persons is begotten, in the divine nature of another person, and not begotten in his own nature : yet the divine nature is but *one* and common to all the persons. Jesus Christ is the son of God by eternal generation of the substance of the Father : yet he is not the son of the essence ; nor is the Father's substance the matter out of which he

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is begotten ; The persons are begotten in the essence, yet but one is said to be begotten.

The Son is second person in deity, the Holy Ghost third : the Son was begotten in the Father's essence,—received his personal subsistence by *generation* and *communication* ; and the Holy Ghost, by *procession* and *communication* from the Father and the Son, yet all the persons in deity are and will be, what they always were, eternally, unchangeably the same. The Father is of none : he hath the essence of himself : the Son is from the Father's essence : and the Holy Ghost from both : yet, no essential difference among the persons ; they are the same in substance or essence ; no superior or inferior ; no prior or posterior. The divine personalities of the Son and Holy Ghost, are derived by communication ; the one by generation, the other by procession : yet all the persons in deity are self-existent. All that is in deity must necessarily and eternally exist.

The Son is all that the Father is : yet not of himself which the Father is,—not unbegotten which the Father is. The Son can do all that the Father does : yet cannot beget a Son in his own nature, which the Father does.

Many such contradictions might be collected from this human system ; and still more from the works of such as have appeared in defence of it. These few are sufficient to shew how contrary it is to itself, and also to the revelation God hath given us. Self-contradiction is a sure evidence of a false hypothesis, whether philosophical or divine,

vine. Such are the improvements made upon the doctrine of the Trinity, by the profound stretches of *their* wit, who have been prying into this sacred doctrine beyond what is revealed by God, who knows best what measure of knowledge therein was necessary for our imperfect state.

I now come, in the last place, to make a few remarks on the pamphlet, which has principally occasioned my present appeal to the public from the Press.

I have already acknowledged in what respect it was rendered of service to me, namely, by stimulating me to a stricter search into, and a more minute investigation of the doctrine of the Trinity. The result is doubtless in the main favourable to the author's design, and therefore he is welcome to the honour that is due to him.

This tribute paid, I hasten to the performance itself, and as my sentiments now coincide with the doctrine he attempts to defend, viz. the *proper divinity* of the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit, as distinct subsistences with the Father, in deity; my principal business is just to point out the erroneous foundation, on which he rests his defence of, at least the former of, these important articles of the Christian faith.

It is evident to every judicious reader of his work, that he adopts the popular notion of *Christ* being the Son of God in his divine nature by *eternal generation* :* and he seems to know no better than

* See also note, Page 6th.

than, that the terms *Word* and *Son* are synonymous. I trust I have proved already to the satisfaction of every unprejudiced mind, the proper ground of our *Saviour's Sonship*, and also the absurdity of the arguments adduced which need not be here repeated.

It is evident also from divine revelation as I have shewed, that the term *Word* is the æconomical character of the *Lord Jesus* before his incarnation—and the term *Son*, after he was manifest in the flesh; consequently they are not synonymous as Mr. W——n insinuates. This being premised, it will be a key to his readers, whereby they will be enabled to judge how far the foundation he builds upon, is *consistent* with the scriptures of truth, or the superstructure he has erected.

I proceed to make some observations on the pamphlet in the order it lies before us. Page 4th, it is said “does not Moses use this very word” (ELOHIM) Deut: vi. 4. to express the *unity* of the Godhead? I answer, by no means: but rather the *Trinity* in the Godhead: for the *unity* is exemplified by the term *JEHOVAH* in the text.—But that is a mistake which might easily be made by a young rash “Scholar,” setting up for a teacher and rebuker.—There are several passages in the 9th, 10th, and other pages, where it seems as if the *Collegian* had forgot himself, and the proper business before him, *i. e.* *Anatomization*: for instead of using the skilful hand and delicate Lancet of a Surgeon, in fits of furious zeal, he resumes the Plasterer's Trowel, and dashes most illiberal abuse, devoid of fear or shame!—
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perhaps he thought, in so doing, he was but following the advice of his *Motto*: however, in his future controversial heats, I would recommend him to observe the apostolic injunction, Galatians vi. 1.

I never said that *Jesus Christ* was a creature only: but Mr. W——n, page 9th, 10th and 11th, seems desirous of proving that the Son is divine only: what then becomes of his *Humanity*? But I have already shewn his true Sonship consists in his being *God-man*.

I cannot help observing here, that where it is said (page 11) “If the words mean, that the Son of God is a creature, they must also mean, that he is born of *every creature*, and consequently, he who is just after said to have created all things; must be produced by those very things which he created.”——Mr. W——n makes a bugbear out of his fertile imagination and then exclaims at his own *Ignis fatuus*!

Notwithstanding the rhetorical flourish, page 16, I aver that *Christ* did not receive his *human soul*, but only his *Body* from his Virgin Mother; and I bind down Mr. W——n to this dilemma, either to own that *Christ's* human soul was the immediate creation of God: or that it was derived by traduction from his earthly parent. If he assents to the former, he is of my opinion; and if to the latter, he must believe that our Saviour's soul partook of *human, original depravity*; for a corrupt fountain cannot bring forth a pure stream. Mr. W——n may therefore choose which side
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of the question he pleases; but the evangelic believers in our Lord's scripture character, cannot but reject with abhorrence the natural consequence flowing from the latter proposition.

I would also beg leave to ask Mr. W——n, if *Christ's* human soul, could be less human than *Adam's*, because the immediate production of God?

With regard to the violent clamour Mr. W——n makes respecting my late adherence to the Methodist connection, I will only say, that I regret their Champion is a *Defserter*.

I now commend the whole to the candour and serious attention of the indulgent reader,——beseeching God, to vouchsafe his blessing thereto, so far as consistent with his Holy Word and Will.

And now Reader, remember it matters not how orthodox thy notions may be about the Trinity, or any other article of faith, so long as thy sins are not forsaken by true repentance: for unless the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with thee, thou art no Christian.



